

Remarks

Reconsideration and reversal of the rejections expressed in the Office Action of December 29, 2006 are respectfully contended in view of the following remarks and the application as amended. The present invention relates generally to packaging for reams of cut paper involving tear tapes made of plastic or paper material inserted into the ream wrap. The tear tapes may be pulled to tear off and open one end of the wrapped ream, leaving the remaining packaging intact to serve as storage and a dispenser for partial reams of paper. As is well-known in the art, ream wrap is made in a roll format, and a roll of ream wrap is often referred to as a web.

Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. The claims as amended overcome this rejection, as discussed below.

Claims 1-3, 6, 12 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Penson (GB 2 206 555); and claims 1-4, 6-10 and 12-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Newsome (U.S. Pat. No. 4,947,994). In order to enhance the prosecution of the present application, claims 1-15 have been cancelled, and new claims 16-35 have been added by this Amendment and Response. Support for such Amendments is found throughout the specification, at e.g., paragraphs [0002] and [0033] of the published application.

Note that there is no teaching or suggestion in the references, alone or in combination, of a method of (1) storing and dispensing a partial ream of paper, or (2) opening a ream of wrapped paper, which comprises providing a ream wrap having therein a tear tape across the web, so that it surrounds the entire width of a wrapped ream of paper; pulling the tear tape across the ream wrap, thereby opening a portion of said ream wrap; and removing one sealed end of said ream wrap, wherein the ream wrap that remains is intact for protecting, storing and dispensing a resulting partial ream of paper.

Penson discloses that its tear strip is applied lengthwise in the direction of the web (see, e.g., Figs. 5 and 6 in reference); such a teaching is contrary to the present invention as disclosed and claimed, in which the tear tape is across the web, so that it surrounds the entire width of the wrapped ream of paper. The following passage from page 3, paragraph 4 of Penson is

instructive: *"As removed from the box in which it was supplied, the paper stack is thus in the desired orientation for access to the tear strip 16, which is used to tear a strip of the panel 13 from the package."* (emphasis added) Thus, there would be a disincentive to place the tear tape in a perpendicular orientation, as in Applicants' invention. Furthermore, Penson discloses that its tear strip comprises a strip of material that is stronger (i.e., dissimilar) than the wrapper; this is again contrary to the presently claimed invention, in which the tear tape and wrapper may be similar or even identical materials.

Newsome is directed to container wrappers for cigarette boxes; the purpose of such wrappers is to keep the boxes fresh prior to sale (see column 1, line 37 of reference). It is of course readily known that no portion of the wrapper is kept after pulling the tear tape; the outer wrapper is simply thrown away by the user. This is supported by Newsome at e.g., column 1, lines 46-49 as follows: *"To open the box, the tear tape is pulled out away from the box. This tears the polypropylene web and allows the web and tear tape to be removed and discarded."* (emphasis added) Thus, Applicants respectfully contend that Newsome teaches away from the use of the portion of ream wrap that remains intact (after pulling the tear tape) for protecting, storing and dispensing its associated contents, as disclosed and claimed in the present invention. Furthermore, given that Penson is directed to wrapping stacks of paper sheets of the kind used in photocopy machines, while Newsome is directed to cigarette packaging (with the consequent discarding of the outer wrapper), there would be no teaching or suggestion to combine such references in order to achieve Applicants' claimed invention. Thus, the rejections are overcome.

Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Penson or Newsome; and claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Penson or Newsome, and Freeman (U.S. Pat. No. 1,994,468). These rejections are overcome based on the previous discussion and the claims as amended.

For all of the above reasons, it is respectfully contended that the solicited claims define patentable subject matter. Reconsideration and reversal of the rejections expressed in the Office Action of December 29, 2006 are respectfully submitted. The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned if any questions arise during the course of reconsideration of this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

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